

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 169

BY REPRESENTATIVE GAROFALO

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the Los Isleños of St. Bernard Parish for their contributions to the culture and history of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the Canary Islands were explored and colonized by Jean de Bethancort under the instructions of King Henry of Castille beginning in 1399 and ending with the conquest of Tenerife in 1496 thereby becoming the first colony of the Spanish Empire; and

WHEREAS, the Canarian chain consists of thirteen islands of which seven are inhabited: Fuerteventura, Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, Hierro, Tenerife, LaPalma, and Gomera; and

WHEREAS, after France ceded Louisiana to Spain and Great Britain in 1766 following the French and Indian War, Spain acquired that portion of Louisiana west of the Mississippi River and the Isle of Orleans located east of the Mississippi including the city of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1770s, the British began planning their route through Louisiana to Mexico to capture the vast deposits of Mexican silver and gold which caused the Spanish to develop Louisiana as a barrier between Mexico and the British colonies east of the Mississippi River along the Gulf Coast; and

WHEREAS, the Spanish sent colonists, known as Isleños because they had come from the Canary Islands, from all seven of the inhabited Canary Islands to Louisiana between 1778 and 1783 in an effort by the Spanish government to populate Louisiana and halt the British colonial expansion west of the Mississippi River, with those first Isleños settling in four locations strategically placed to defend New Orleans – Galveztown, just south of Baton Rouge; Valenzuela, along Bayou Lafourche; Barataria, along Bayou des

Families in Jefferson Parish; and La Concepcion, later San Bernardo, in St. Bernard Parish along Bayou Terre-aux-Boeufs; and

WHEREAS, two hundred years ago, the Isleños fought under the command of Governor Bernardo de Galvez in the American Revolution and successfully thwarted the British invasion of Louisiana during the Battle of New Orleans in 1814; and

WHEREAS, of the four Isleños settlements, San Bernardo, established in 1779 along Bayou Terre-aux-Boeufs, was the most successful with the farmers there providing most of the garlic, onions, beans, potatoes, and poultry consumed by the residents of nearby New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Isleños social life was centered around family and the Roman Catholic Church with sometimes four generations of family living and working together on the farms along Bayou Terre-aux-Boeufs; and

WHEREAS, Manuel Solis and Antonio Mendez, two officials in the Spanish administration of Colonial Louisiana, perfected the process of granulating sugar at their Woodlake Plantation in 1787, a process that enabled sugar to quickly become a profitable cash crop that would replace indigo as the major cash crop in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, not only did the Isleños of St. Bernard Parish influence Louisiana's ability to produce plentiful sugar and her reputation as a sugar-producing region, they were well-known for their fishing communities with the residents of Delacroix, Shell Beach, and Ycloskey harvesting the seafood that supplied the New Orleans restaurants and began the Louisiana reputation for fine Gulf seafood and fine dining in the city of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, the marshes of St. Bernard Parish were nationally recognized for the abundance of mink, muskrat, and other fur-bearing animals which produced highly prized pelts in the years prior to World War II producing a multimillion dollar industry; and

WHEREAS, the history of the Isleños and of St. Bernard Parish are inextricably intertwined with the history and renown of the entire state of Louisiana and they have both played a vital role in making Louisiana the state she is today.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Los Isleños of St. Bernard Parish for their contributions to the culture and history of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the
Los Isleños Heritage & Cultural Society in St. Bernard Parish.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE